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STUDIES IN SCOTTISH LITERATURE

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STUDIES IN SCOTTISH LITERATURE is an independent quarterly devoted to all aspects of Scottish literature. Articles and notes are welcome.
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EDITORIAL

As anyone who has worked in the field of Scottish literature is aware, there is a pressing need for bibliographies. Without these essential tools for research scholars have no way of knowing what has already been written, and this in turn leads to much wasteful duplication of effort. We need bibliographies of writers' works, as well as of critical estimates of their works.

Several fine bibliographies exist already; the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions and the Records of the Glasgow Bibliographical Society are most useful and it is much to be regretted that the latter has ceased publication. William Geddie's Bibliography of Middle Scots Poetry (S.T.S.) is of prime importance, as is J. C. Corson's Bibliography of Sir Walter Scott: A Classified and Annotated List of Books and Articles relating to his Life and Works, 1797-1940. There are, however, all too few works of this sort; the student of Scottish literature discovers that checklists for minor writers are generally non-existent, and that those for the more important authors are frequently incomplete and inaccurate.

The last bibliography of Robert Burns, for instance, is James Gibson's volume of 1881 — a most useful work, but sorely outdated. For information on Burnsiana subsequent to 1880 scholars have had to go to the half-dozen catalogues of Burns collections issued by libraries. Even the best of these, the Mitchell Library Catalogue of Robert Burns Collection (1959), is incomplete as must be any work of reference which is confined to the holdings of a single library. We are soon to have a bibliography of Burns compiled by Professor J. W. Egerer, but this will solve the problem for only one author.

Fortunately an enterprising and energetic start has been made under the direction of Dr. W. R. Aitken, as chairman and editor of a committee of the Scottish Central Library in Edinburgh, to gather bibliographic information on recent Scottish authors, the project to be called A Bibliography of Scottish Literature, 1900-1950. This will list the works of about one hundred writers of the first half of the twentieth century, in a style reminiscent of H. P. Thieme's Bibliographie de la litterature francaise de 1800-1930. A full list of the authors to be included in this bibliography is to be found in the Scottish Central Library's Annual Report for 1960-1961. Although there have been a few additions to and deletions from this list since it was published, it still provides a general indication of intention and coverage.

The Bibliotек, which is published by the Scottish Group of The University and Research Section of The Library Association, has to date published four extremely useful checklists (on Lewis Grassic Gibbon,
Neil Gunn, Hugh MacDiarmid and William Soutar) and it is understood that there may be more.

A forthcoming study by Duncan Glen, Hugh MacDiarmid and the Scottish Renaissance, is to contain a lengthy bibliography in three sections: the first dealing with MacDiarmid himself; the second with other poets, novelists, and dramatists; and the third with critical studies of the Scottish Renaissance. Another work of major importance, now in progress, is Duncan Gollan’s comprehensive guide to the Scottish novel, which will contain a bibliography on the lines of Lucien Leclaire’s A General Analytical Bibliography of the Regional Novelists of the British Isles, 1800-1950.

Finally, the editor of this journal has commenced work on a bibliography of Scottish poetry, 1700-1900. There are at present approximately 10,000 entries taken principally from the Mitchell Library “Catalogue of Scottish Poetry” (unpublished); when this work is completed titles will have been added from all significant collections of Scottish poetry.

The above-mentioned publications and projects are just a start, admittedly a good start, if we are to prepare for the systematic study of Scottish literature.

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